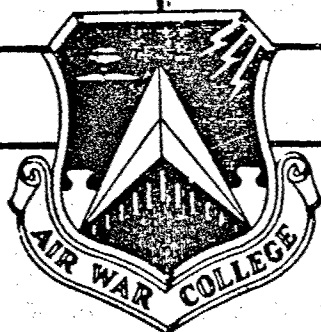


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# AIR WAR COLLEGE

## RESEARCH REPORT

TITLE IV OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1986: HIDDEN IMPACTS

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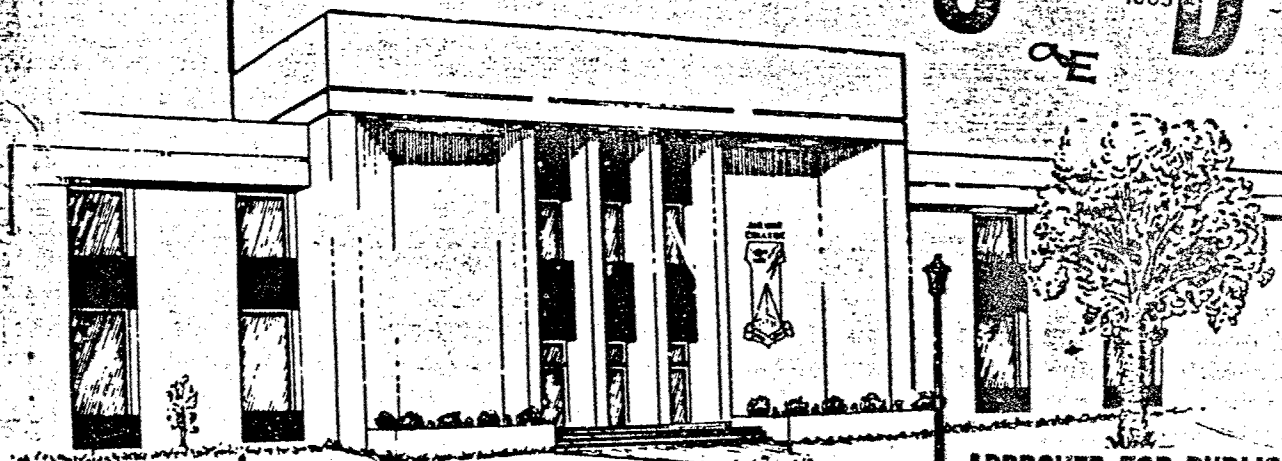
LT COL ROBERT E. GATLIFF

AND

LT COL MARY C. PRUITT

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TITLE IV OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1986:

## HIDDEN IMPACTS

ny

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and

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A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

IN

## FULFILLMENT OF THE RESEARCH

## REQUIREMENT

Research Advisor: Colonel Ronald L. Morey

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

April 1988

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# AIR WAR COLLEGE RESEARCH REPORT ABSTRACT

TITLE: TITLE IV OF DOD REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1986:  
HIDDEN IMPACTS

AUTHORS: Robert E. Gatliff, Lieutenant Colonel, USAF, and  
Mary C. Pruitt, Lieutenant Colonel, USAF

A discussion of the background for military reform focuses on Title IV of the DOD Reorganization Act of 1986 and how the legislation will present problems of implementation for the services. A review of the law leads into a look at how it affects careerism and professionalism. Further impacts are discussed concerning career plateauing of non-Joint Specialty Officers and how the law affects their careers and then a look at how the law will have predictable pitfalls for the designated Joint Specialty Officers. The result of the above is presented as operational impacts to the ability of future leaders of the military to obtain the necessary operational expertise and experience necessary to become effective leaders. A recommendation is made to correct these problems. *Keywords: promotion, military officers, (K2)*



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act of 1986 covers a multitude of organizational changes that will significantly impact the management of the Department of Defense. In statements before Congress on 8 October 1985, Senator Sam Nunn (Democrat/GA) termed the legislation as "probably the most important undertaking regarding national security in the last 30 or 40 years and perhaps longer." (24:37) On that same date, Senator Barry Goldwater (Republican/AZ) stated that "the reorganization of the Department of Defense may be the most important thing that Congress does in my lifetime." (24:37)

For many years prior to the legislation, Congress expressed concern over the quality and training of military officers working in positions outside of their parent services in a joint service environment. This resulted in a number of studies by special boards and "blue ribbon" panels. Additionally, military reform has been urged by a large number of former, senior DOD civilian and military officials. The Honorable Lawrence J. Korb, then Vice President, Corporate Operations, Raytheon Corporation, and former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower, Reserve Affairs and Logistics, testified in favor of major changes within the joint officer management

system, stating in part:

By and large officers assigned to joint duty, especially the joint staff, are not the "best and brightest." Nor are they as prepared as they should be for joint assignments. Finally, they are not as competitive for promotion as officers who have remained close to their services. (32:287)

The military leaders of today have responded with an honest recognition that much improvement can come from the reorganization. As a result, they are pushing their services toward full implementation of the new law. However, there has been one distinct area of the law which has all of the services concerned. Title IV—"The Joint Officer Personnel Policy"—carves deeply into the personnel management of all the services. The greatest concern comes over the establishment of a cadre of joint specialty officers (JSO's) and the potential for that corps to become an elite careerist group. Many senior military leaders fear this will detract from the current emphasis on developing the war-fighting skills of our officers and their ability to prepare themselves for future leadership positions. The additional requirement that an officer must have completed a joint tour in order to be promoted to general officer further exacerbates feared careerism implications. This stipulation eliminates the possibility of picking up the "late bloomers" and strictly operations-oriented officers for promotion to general officer at a later date.

Prior to the passage of the law, the Department of



Defense was asked to comment on proposed changes. In a 5 March 1985 letter from the office of the Secretary of Defense to Senator Goldwater, it was suggested that "any proposed legislation be required to meet a set of clearly defined management criteria." It was further proposed that "the legislation should include provisions that would have management and operational benefits which would clearly outweigh the inevitable disruption that accompanies reorganization." Later, after a review of the actual proposed provisions of the legislation, the Department of Defense had additional recommendations. In an 18 October 1985 letter from the General Counsel of the Secretary of Defense to the Honorable Les Aspin, Chairman, Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives, the concern was expressed that:

Many of the changes prescribed could be achieved primarily through management initiatives rather than through more radical, inflexible legislation. (8:2)

Robin Pirie, who previously served as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower, Reserve Affairs and Logistics, and at the time of testimony before Congress was the Vice President of the Institute of Defense Analysis, felt change was needed. He was unhappy with the procedures for selecting, training, and promoting officers in joint duty billets. His concern was that the services did not have the incentive to assign their best officers to joint duty. Even though he acknowledged the need for

change, he clarified that he did not believe such change could be effectively legislated. Specifically, he said:

This bill, like other congressional attempts to legislate policy, is bound to have many unforeseen consequences and unintended results. (32:797)

Each of the military service chiefs and civilian service secretaries have aired their concerns in testimony before Congress since passage of the law on 1 October 1986. The framers of the legislation recognized the fact that some provisions of the law would need revision. The conference report stated:

...the conferees expect that unanticipated problems will be identified as the Defense Department implements the provisions of Title IV of the conference substitute amendment and that adjustments will be necessary...the conferees expressed a willingness to consider promptly any adjustments to these provisions that the Secretary of Defense may recommend based upon insights that actual implementation may provide. (33:134)

As the law is implemented, the services are finding that the majority of the law is feasible and workable. However, as the Air Force Chief of Staff, General Welch, stated, "the 3 1/2 year tour for field grade officers in the joint staff and the 3 year tour for general officers is mathematically 'impossible'." (2:10) While this and other aspects of the legislation are a problem, the chief concern is the long range ramifications on overall force personnel management.

Despite the conference committee's statement that adjustments to the law were expected, to date, most changes that have been proposed have been rejected. In fact,

many of the areas of concern have been made even more rigid by the House subcommittee when issues have been raised. The recommendations of the service secretaries, Chiefs of Staffs, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff have been disregarded. The professional opinions of these officials are that they will encounter major problems with full implementation of the law.

Chairman Nichols, in responding to a consensus by the Chiefs (and presented by the Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Crowe, 1 May 1987) on their analysis revealing several areas where modifications would strengthen the joint community, responded that "the proposed changes would weaken the intent of the legislation." (30:--)

As mentioned earlier, at the core of the services' concern is the establishment of an occupational category, referred to as the "joint specialty," for the management of officers who are trained in, and oriented toward, joint matters. The stated intent is to attempt to eliminate the perceived parochial bias by service officers that might be exhibited while assigned to the joint arena.

The proposed solution to prevent what has been termed as "interservice rivalry" may, in fact, create problems much greater and more divisive than those that it was intended to solve. In this paper we will discuss the problems we see as having a strong probability of

developing. We will start with a short review of the Goldwater/Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act. Then we will look at the specific areas of Careerism or Professionalism, Impact on Promotions, Career Plateauing of Non-Joint Service Officers, Predictable Pitfalls Inherent with a JSO Elite, and finally, Operational Implications.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LAW

Title IV of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 was effective on 1 October, 1986, and covers requirements for the personnel management of joint officers. The law includes the management of both field grade (majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels) and general officers. The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 Conference Report (99-824) provides a good summary of provisions required by Title IV. The major points summarized were:

1. Establishes an occupational category, referred to as the "joint specialty," for the management of officers who are trained in and oriented toward joint matters.
2. Provides that joint specialty officers shall be selected by the Secretary of Defense from nominees submitted by the Secretaries of the Military Departments.
3. Requires that an officer may not be selected for the joint specialty until he completes a joint education program and a full joint duty tour.
4. Requires that 50 percent of joint duty positions in grades above captain/Navy lieutenant be filled by officers

who have been nominated or selected for the joint specialty.

5. Directs the Secretary of Defense to designate at least 1,000 critical joint duty assignments that must always be filled by joint specialty officers.
6. Requires the Secretary of Defense to establish career guidelines for joint specialty officers.
7. Requires, subject to a waiver by the Secretary of Defense, that all officers promoted to general or flag rank must attend an education course (CAPSTONE) on working with the other armed forces.
8. Requires all joint specialty officers and a high proportion of other officers who graduate from a joint school to be assigned immediately to a joint duty position.
9. Prescribes, subject to a waiver by the Secretary of Defense, that joint duty tours shall be at least 3 years in length for general and flag officers and at least 3 1/2 years in length for other officers.
10. Requires the Secretary of Defense to exclude joint training assignments and assignments within the Military Departments in the definition of "joint duty assignments."
11. Specifies that each promotion board, subject to a waiver for the Marine Corps, that will consider officers who have served in joint duty assignments shall include at least one joint duty officer designated by the JCS Chairman.

12. Establishes the following promotion review process for officers who are serving, or have served, in joint duty assignments:

- a. requires the Secretary of Defense to furnish to the Secretaries of the Military Departments guidelines to ensure that promotion boards give appropriate consideration to joint duty performance;
- b. directs the JCS Chairman to review promotion board reports before they are submitted to the Secretary of Defense;
- c. authorizes the Secretary of a Military Department, if the JCS Chairman determines that the promotion board acted contrary to the Secretary of Defense's guidelines, to return the report to the promotion board (or a subsequent promotion board) for further proceedings, convene a special promotion board, or take other appropriate action;
- d. directs the Secretary of Defense to take appropriate action to resolve any remaining disagreement between the Secretary of a Military Department and the JCS Chairman.

13. Requires the Secretary of Defense to ensure that the qualifications of officers assigned to joint duty assignments are such that certain promotion rates will

be achieved.

14. Requires, subject to a waiver by the Secretary of Defense, that an officer may not be promoted to general or flag rank unless he has served in a joint duty assignment.
15. Requires the JCS Chairman to evaluate the joint duty performance of officers recommended for three- and four-star rank.
16. Requires the Secretary of Defense to advise the President on the qualifications needed by officers to serve in three- and four-star positions. (33:96-97)

In addition to the summary provided above, there are several other provisions that should be noted.

Additive to item 11 above is that officers assigned to any joint duty should have a promotion rate not less than the rate of officers of the same Service assigned to the headquarters staff of their Service.

Regarding relief from the law's provisions, it allows that officers who possess a "...critical occupational specialty involving combat operations (as designated by the Secretary of Defense)..." may be selected for the joint specialty after only two years of a joint duty tour and completion of the joint professional military education. Any officer selected for the joint specialty under this provision is required to complete a regular



joint tour as soon as practicable after the selection.

To be selected for promotion to general officer, the law requires the officer to have completed a joint duty assignment. It also directs that to be selected as Commander-in-Chief of a unified command, Chief of Staff of a military Service, or Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the officer must be a joint specialty officer and, in addition, must have served a tour of duty in a joint duty assignment while a general officer.

The law also allows a waiver for joint duty assignment before promotion to general officer by the Secretary of Defense for officers "...whose proposed selection for promotion is based primarily upon scientific and technical qualification for which joint requirements do not exist...." (33:43)

An important part of the legislation is the transition provisions that allow the military to fully implement Title IV.

The law allows the Secretary of Defense to waive the requirement for a joint duty assignment for promotion to general officer until 1 January 1992, if the officer "...served before the date of the enactment of this subsection in an assignment (other than a joint duty assignment) that involved significant experience in joint matters (as determined by the Secretary)." (33:43-44)

Additionally, the law provides transition provisions

for the selection of Joint Specialty Officers. The Secretary of Defense is allowed to waive either the joint professional military education or the requirement for a completed joint duty assignment following the education, but not both. (33:44) The law also allows the Secretary of Defense to, "consider as a joint assignment any tour of duty served by the officer before the date of the enactment of this Act (or being served on the date of the enactment of this Act) that was considered to be a joint duty assignment or a joint equivalent assignment under the regulations in effect at the time the assignment began." (33:45) These transition provisions expire on 1 October, 1988.

With these legal provisions in mind, we can now look at how they will affect the professionalism of the officer corps.

### CHAPTER III

#### CAREERISM OR PROFESSIONALISM?

Webster defines a careerist as "that person who is interested chiefly in achieving his own professional ambition to the neglect of other things." Careerism is "the behavior of a careerist--exclusive or selfish devotion to professional ambitions." (34:221) The Air Force Chief of Staff, General Larry Welch, is well known to be adamant about discouraging careerism among members of the Air Force. (35:--) How very ironic that, during his tenure as the Chief, he is confronted with Title IV of the Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act. It dictates establishment of a careerist elite--the Joint Specialty Officer (JSO) who, as a senior captain or junior major, must be identified and put through joint Professional Military Education (PME) and joint duty assignment wickets in order to qualify for consideration for general officer. The results may be that this legislation, like no other before, will create a careerist elite.

Some have labelled military officers as being of an "entrepreneurial mentality." These officers are allegedly more concerned with managing their careers to ensure promotion than with serving the nation. (6:80)

However, the motivation of vast numbers of conscientious, dedicated and hard-working majors,

lieutenant colonels and colonels, in part, stems from their professional aspirations. They continuously set goals for themselves to be successful in competition for challenging assignments and promotions. And, in the midst of their aspirations, they apply themselves to the accomplishment of the mission of the Air Force. They are truly professionals. Professionals, as defined by Webster, "are those who have much experience and great skill in a specified role." (34:1163) These officers do not fit the designation of careerist, rather, they are doing a good job because they believe in the Air Force and the defense of the nation. "Professionalism" does not negate their desires and ambitions to continue to succeed in the promotion system. To deny the reality of that human desire is to disregard that Air Force (military) professionals possess normal emotions and needs—needs like those that are inherent in capable individuals in all professions.

Ambition and desire for promotion are considered more than just acceptable. In the civilian work force, as well as the military, they are often deemed essential if one is to be judged as a successful contributor by others. (15:611)

One cannot expect potential leaders to possess vision toward meaningful accomplishments for the establishment if they are denied envisioning their own progress within the establishment. In the Air Force, such progress is

most clearly evident in achieving success in the promotion system. Such aspirations are characteristic of professionals who recognize that with hard work also come personal satisfaction, accomplishments and promotions. These aspirations are not to the detriment of the organization; they are, in fact, the elements that complement the organization.

However, Title IV, in establishing the joint officer specialty, will create an "elite" officer corps, with officers being forced to join this exclusive group in order to advance their career goals. The Joint Specialty Officer "corps" will become a sort of super careerist class, with a type of careerism much stronger than we experience today. (23:19)

Until the military sets the exact number of joint requirements that have to be filled, the Air Force cannot determine the number of joint officers that must be maintained and trained through joint PME. Once that determination is made however, there will be a certain percentage of officers who will assess what needs to be done to remain competitive for promotion. As a result, both those with professional aspirations to best serve the organization and those with a tendency toward "careerism" will begin planing their careers to fill the "new squares." A new class of careerist officers will be created who are merely following what has been mandated by

Congress as necessary to progress in the military.

In observing the process, one must recognize that there is a fine line between "professionalism" and "careerism." It is arguably incorrect to label all military officers who want to succeed in the promotion system as "careerist." Such success for many is a strong personal and professional aspiration. However, such aspirations cannot be categorically viewed as overpowering an otherwise strong commitment and dedication to the Air Force.

Both careerists and professionals are realizing that the creation of the JSO will have a significant impact on the outcome of the promotion system.

## CHAPTER IV

### IMPACT ON PROMOTIONS

Some believe an officer's career randomly places him or her in one assignment after another and, thus, builds the potential which subsequently makes that officer competitive for promotion to general officer. In some cases that may be what happens. However, the conscientious officer knows that potential success may well depend on capitalizing on new opportunities. Exposure to a variety of job opportunities allows an officer to gain diversified experience and, in turn, broaden the knowledge base. A succession of such different experiences better prepares an officer to become competitive for future challenging positions.

The AF Form 90, Officer Career Objective Statement (Lieutenant Colonel and below), and the AF Form 620, Colonel Resume, give individual officers the opportunity to express their preferences. The Officer Effectiveness Report (OER) requires an officer's supervisor to document past performance and predict future potential. The more thorough and convincing these documents are, the better opportunity the officer has in the assignment process to receive the really tough, challenging billets.

Our promotion system is founded on selecting officers based on their potential to assume the next higher grade.

Those selections become more competitive as one progresses to the more senior ranks. The Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA) recognized that many will be fully qualified, but the limited number of quotas would necessitate selection of only the "best" qualified.

Yet, the Goldwaters-Nichols Act redefines DOPMA and dictates a new "eligibility cut" for promotion to general officer. In order to be fully qualified and, thus, be eligible to compete for best qualified, an officer must have served a full joint tour. By itself, this provision may not appear to be unreasonable until one considers that those selected to fill the critical joint billets must, in most cases, come from those nominated as captains and majors to be Joint Specialty Officers. In short, if one does not get on that train early, there are no tracks to follow that will prepare an officer to be competitive for promotion beyond colonel.

One can argue that the percentage of officers who attain the grade of general is so small that it should not be a major concern that the law necessarily limits the pool of eligibles. But, on closer examination, the smaller pool is a major concern. That concern, and the fact that the tour lengths prescribed by Title IV would result in fewer officers being cycled through joint duty, was addressed by then Secretary of the Navy, James H. Webb, Jr. He noted that "extended tours of duty would



reduce the numbers of officers who have joint experience and, thus, limit the resource pool from which senior officers are selected." (3:3)

By virtue of attaining categorization as a Joint Specialty Officer, the opportunity for promotion to general officer will become significantly enhanced.

The promotion system, as prescribed by current law, requires that an officer may not be considered by a selection board for promotion unless the board considers all officers who are senior to him/her. The promotion board may recommend for promotion only those officers it considers to be fully qualified. If the number of fully qualified officers competing is greater than the number of vacancies, the promotion board will select the best qualified. (14:--) In essence, consideration under Title IV of the Goldwater-Nichols Act will be in technical terms only. Colonels will become eligible for promotion to brigadier general based on their dates of rank. However, their lack of a joint tour will mean they are not fully qualified and therefore are automatically not competitive for promotion.

Under Title IV, those who are not selected to be JSO's, or do not complete a joint tour, are simply not going to be eligible for promotion to general. This will be the case no matter how proficient they are in their chosen field or how dynamic in their leadership abilities.

In testimony before Congress on 1 May 1987, Admiral Crowe noted the "challenges to be confronted in finding a balanced approach that meets the DOD requirements in the joint arena, establishes a rewarding career pattern for the JSO, and yet continues the fairness that is the hallmark of the military promotion system." He made reference to earlier comments by former Chairman of The Joint Chiefs of Staff, General David C. Jones, that indicated a need for the services to correct past deficiencies in the joint arena. He further noted General Jones' emphasis that as large a number of officers as possible be given the experience of joint tours. That concern was to ensure a sufficiently large number of qualified officers would be available to compete for future senior leadership positions. (30:—)

The Air Force will attempt to preserve the fundamental purpose of the officer promotion program as stated in AFR 36-89 (Promotion of Active Duty List Officers, 15 Sept 1981):

to select officers through a fair and competitive selection process that advances the best qualified officers to positions of increased responsibility and authority and provide the necessary career incentive to attract and maintain a high quality officer force.(1:1)

Title IV makes the definition of "fair and competitive" even more elusive than it has been in the past--especially to the non-JSO. Not only will the potential to be competitive in the promotion system

diminish, the non-JSOs likewise will experience frustration when they recognize their career progress has plateaued.

## CHAPTER V

### CAREER PLATEAUIING OF NON-JOINT SPECIALTY OFFICERS

One of the hidden impacts of Title IV will be the career plateauing of the non-JSOs. With full implementation of Title IV it will be apparent early in an officer's career that without the joint tour completion, they can wave goodbye to any professional aspirations for promotion to general officer. As noted earlier, in relation to the large numbers of field grade officers, the percentage who attain general officer is relatively small. Comparatively however, the "professional aspirations" of the huge numbers of field grade officers are not small. A concern that must be recognized by leadership is the impact Title IV will have on the greater portion of the officer force--the non-JSOs.

"Career plateauing" is an area that has been researched in the civilian sector and could potentially be applicable to non-JSOs. The term is normally considered as having a negative tone that suggests failure and defeat. In actuality, there is nothing inherently negative about the notion of a career plateau. To say that a person has plateaued tells us nothing about that person's performance on the job, morale, ambition, or any other personal or behavioral characteristic. It simply describes that individual's current career status within a particular

organization. (15:603)

Tom Peters in his best-selling book In Search of Excellence describes how we are all creatures of our environment who are very sensitive and responsive to external rewards and punishment. He notes that, although we are strongly driven from within (and self-motivated), we also desperately need meaning in our lives. For that reason, we will sacrifice a great deal to the institution that will provide meaning for us. Peters also notes that "people tune out if they feel they are failing, because 'the system' is to blame." (26:50)

Organizationally plateaued is a person's status when, although possessing the ability to perform well in higher level jobs, because of a lack of openings, experience or opportunities, one is prohibited from being competitive for progression or promotions. (15:604) Besides the tendency for the organization to treat its plateaued people passively, the organization may also hurt itself by denying these personnel access to challenging assignments where their talents and expertise can best benefit the organization. Additionally, the potential impact on self-image may likewise damage the abilities of the individual.

How one considers his/her self-image can be directly related to that person's feelings of value. Values are an individual's sources of satisfaction such as

status. (31:19) Webster defines status as "a state, or condition--position, rank, standing". (34:1425)

In addition to a person's aptitudes and work interests, he/she has life adjustments and satisfactions which affect behavior and aspirations arising from value commitments. Such value commitments, or internalized criteria, consist of what that person considers to be the "good life."

His behavior arises out of matters he considers to be important as forces in determining his style of living, his daily behavior, and his aspirations which serve to 'pull' (teleology) him into the future. (18:149)

Unfortunately the non-JSOs, who recognize themselves as career plateaued, may encounter difficulty progressing towards any goal directed activity. They may see their futures at a dead end. The consequence would be a decline in their career attitudes (i.e. pessimism about future prospects).

The organization would then probably lose the manager, either in the physical sense (resignation) or the psychological sense (staying on with reduced enthusiasm for the work). Either way, an investment in human resources would not be realized, either partly or fully. (20:395)

The difficult reality can potentially dilute a career plateaued officer's professionalism. They may view their "employment" more as a job due to the lessened incentive to proceed with a "career."

And yet, many of these officers will have progressed to that stage in their lives when they are experiencing their greatest productivity. In Gail Sheehy's book Passages, she discusses the highly refined dimension of

growth that is only possible and appropriate after an individual has had time to profit by years of life experiences. Sheehy says:

...gaining our authenticity. means the arrival at that felicitous state of inner expression in which we know of all our potentialities and possess the ego strength to direct their full reach. (29:34)

The prospects exist in Title IV for the direction of those potentialities to be thwarted--thwarted by a system that will not encourage military professionals to direct their strengths to full fruition, but will prevent their professional aspirations.

The question, "is it better to tell a manager that he or she has plateaued or to allow the individual to maintain hope of eventual promotion?" will not apply to the military officer once the Joint Specialty Officer identifications have been made. The answer will be obvious--if one has not completed a joint tour assignment, aspirations for certain type assignments or promotion to general are not only unrealistic, they are in fact, prohibited by law!

In turn, the legislation has the potential of creating pitfalls for the designated "fast track" JSOs. The next chapter will discuss some of these possibilities.

## CHAPTER VI

### PREDICTABLE PITFALLS INHERENT WITH A JSO ELITE

When one speaks of "fast track," either in the civilian or military arena, the term generally refers to those persons identified as having the strongest potential for being rapidly moved through the system and placed earlier in more responsible leadership/management positions than their peers. While the establishment of the Joint Specialty Officer does not necessarily equate to that commonly referred to as the fast track, both the JSO track and the fast track (below-the-promotion-zone in the military) share a potential long term problem. Indeed, the potential strongly exists for the JSO to be deprived of building a solid technical foundation in his/her service specialty.

Every officer must develop and demonstrate solid competence in some critical task or function. Those who fail to do so will have no major building block for a career outside the joint staffing arena. An understanding of the technical aspects of a specialty becomes critical when officers are placed in more senior management and leadership positions. Without such technical expertise, they will not know what questions to ask or how to maintain control over the operational area. Even the most dedicated, hard-working and honest officer cannot replace a



void in experience, especially in the operational arena. If one does not understand the critical functions of the specialty or lacks technical expertise, it will not be possible to provide technical leadership or offer subordinates help on technical problems.

Likewise, the non-"fast trackers" or non-JSO will suffer. First, the lack of continuity that will be apparent for the JSOs who lack extensive experience in their service specialties will have a negative impact on the careers of subordinates. Subordinates will depend on these officers for leadership as well as their performance appraisals and recommendations for promotion.

The pressure on the JSOs will be tremendous. They will be expected to not only develop joint expertise, but also to maintain reasonable currency in their service specialties to insure they are ready for return duty in the future. While that emphasis is occurring with the JSOs, the non-JSO's, who will have more difficulty progressing to the higher ranks due to the lack of joint experience, will have many of their talents virtually bypassed. Basically, there is the potential for a system that motivates a small percentage of employees and turns off the majority, thereby creating discontent.

In order to broaden the careers of JSOs (to groom for future senior leadership and management positions), they will have to be rotated between joint assignments and

operational or service assignments. There will, no doubt, be many occasions where they are placed in a billet and given responsibility for experienced specialists who are better qualified by specialty expertise to occupy the billet. When such situations occur, it will be difficult for that specialist (non-JSO) to confront the boss—or the assignment system. In such circumstances, feelings of resentment may develop, and people will begin to think of themselves as second class citizens in the organization. The non-JSOs will recognize, and rightly so, that they have less upward mobility than they had before the JSO existed.

James Rosenbaum, in a study on career patterns in a corporation, compared promotions to a career tournament: "...in which contestants must succeed in early rounds to participate in later rounds." From Rosenbaum's research, it appears that the valuable abilities of "late bloomers" may never be recognized and utilized in an organization that concentrates on identifying "future leaders" early on and aiming them toward a specific track. (27:236) The frustrations of the overlooked officers, the non-JSOs, may eventually lead them to perform far below their ability or even to pursue their career interests elsewhere. (13:32)

The potential for creating voids in an officer's service specialty expertise by placing him or her in the

JSO track early may in fact end up programming the officer for ultimate failure. Indeed, if such voids are created, the officer may be denied the opportunity to engage in a full career that might have otherwise tapped considerable potential. The JSOs who encounter difficulties when placed in leadership and management positions in their service specialties, will meet with disillusionment, disenchantment, and frustration. Further, through their derailments, the potential pool from which to select future officers for promotion to general will dwindle even further. In the military, as in any organization where leadership is essential for survival, the loss of a significant number of potential leaders may ultimately decrease the chances of organizational success. (21:47)

Not only is the progressive development of the specialty skills critical, but so is the officer's development of interpersonal relationships. As a result, the failure to acquire the necessary personal skills to lead groups of people in large organizations may occur. (21:47) This inability will be to the detriment of the JSO's career potential as well as to the detriment of the organization.

Rosenbaum also points out in his tournament model some "dysfunctional" consequences in that initial wins in the tournament can,

....tend to create self-fulfilling prophecies in which early winners are seen as 'high-potential people' who can do no

wrong and who are given additional opportunities and challenges, while those who do not win in the early competition are given little or no chance to prove themselves again.

The early winners will continue in the challenging socialization process which will help them to develop themselves further, while the others will receive a custodial socialization process which will homogenize them to fit undemanding, alienating roles. (27:236-237) While the system (the military) may never intend for this to happen, individual officers will invariably experience such feelings.

Without a crystal ball, the long range leadership potential of those officers identified to be JSOs is difficult to predict. Likewise, it will be difficult to determine if it is really in the best interests of the services to select the bulk of the pool of potential candidates for general officer when they are still senior captains or junior majors. The probability will exist that the JSO selection will largely be governed by identifying individual characteristics without examining how well an individual's abilities fit particular job demands. Professionals in industry and examples of some in the military reflect that those who have skipped fundamental development stages in their specialty have often found themselves in some difficulty later on in their careers. (13:32)

While testifying to Congress on the proposed legislation, Dr. Tom Peters expressed his concern over creating an elite officer corp. His comments were:

I do full well understand that the intent is not to create an elite. And when I look back at the private sector over the last 25 years, we did not mean to create an elite with central financial planners and strategic planners, but it turned out that way because they were closer to the big chair. And, by definition, it worked that we had the wrong people in the elite status. So I understand the intent and that is my fear. The intent is marvelous. The reality, I fear might be something other than marvelous. (32:831)

Dr. Peters expressed his view from experience and hindsight. Such insights are not unlike those our military planners, service Secretaries and Chiefs have attempted to express to Congress.

While "careerism" and "elite corps" are factors that should be discussed, how this legislation affects our day-to-day ability to wage war also deserves attention.

## CHAPTER VII

### OPERATIONAL IMPACTS

The hidden impact of the Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act will be how it affects the overall operational capability of the day-to-day Air Force. We have already discussed the career impacts on both the JSOs and the non-JSOs, and how it will change their outlook on the Air Force. This chapter will look at how the Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act will affect the combat capability of our leaders and the corresponding impact on the overall Air Force.

The most important function of the Air Force is its war-fighting capability. As a result, the Air Force (and other services) has historically put the best and brightest officers in positions of leadership within each organization. This ensures that each unit has the best possible chance of success in the event it has to go to war. In turn, as mentioned in chapter IV, our personnel system has been built around providing these officers the necessary background and experience to perform their jobs via the assignment process. These assignments enhance their knowledge of Air Force doctrine, command policies, staff functions and capabilities, and force employment in conjunction with other Air Force and sister service units. While there is not a single career sequence that ensures a

command billet or success in same, all of the sequences better one's understanding of how to best employ assigned forces should the need arise. When one considers the possible impacts, total understanding of how to best employ the forces assigned has to be the primary goal in designing a proper career pattern.

The Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act dictates career assignments for our officers that may have a significant impact on their ability to function as effective commanders. An officer's knowledge of command structure, understanding of command policies, and familiarity with staff functions are important factors in his or her ability to successfully carry out the assigned mission. Staff tours are common and expected during the course of a military career. What is significant is where the tour is served and how it impacts the officer's depth of knowledge for later use during a command or even higher level staff tour.

In a Major Command/Headquarters Air Force (MAJCOM/HAF) tour, an officer can be expected to gain a wealth of knowledge that can be both useful and necessary during future assignments. In a MAJCOM/HAF tour, insight can be gained in the operational employment of one's own service capabilities. In addition, one gains an appreciation for the impact of future systems' operational capability and a working knowledge of present

force structure/modernization beddown plans and driving factors that determine these plans. Additionally, training restrictions and limitations can provide a keen appreciation of how these plans and operational capabilities can be married into a comprehensive and cohesive force employment plan. This information can serve as an excellent basis for making intelligent decisions when an officer goes back to the field and serves as a senior commander.

Serving in a joint tour can also significantly increase an officer's perspective on how each of the services fits in the overall big picture. However, it can be argued that the knowledge gained from serving in a joint tour billet below the general/flag officer level will not appreciably enhance one's knowledge of operational constraints and limitations associated with present day sophisticated weapons systems. This point was proven in World War II by the German General Staff in its lack of specialization.

The German General Staff was created on the premise that "integration" was the only way to effectively run a military organization. Officers were picked at a young age (avg. 28 years old) to attend a three year school that ingrained tactics, and the integration of all the military forces available. Individual service (tank, infantry, air force) perspectives became blurred with the plan for



use of the "total" force. No one worried about being the "expert" on an individual branch of the service. The conclusion of the U.S and British Intelligence agencies published in 1946 stated:

Their contempt for specialization, however, meant that they too often paid little regard to the collection and the processing of information. Because of the focusing of their attention on the general picture, they failed to realize what could be achieved by the sifting of detail in building up the general picture. As a result, German commanders in preparing their plans did not always have at their disposal the information about the enemy which specialists, adequately organized by the General Staff, could have provided. (22:95-96)

Specialization, or knowledge of one's own service capabilities, is an important, and yet, hard to quantify aspect of how to employ available forces. How the new leaders are trained has a direct impact on their ability to be successful in command positions.

The problem lies in the amount of time available once reaching Lt Colonel/Commander. According to a recent GAO report it takes 14 years (14.2 rounded off) from the time an officer makes O-4 until he/she becomes eligible for general officer. In order to command, attain staff experience, Intermediate/Senior Service School, joint tour, and then move to the next higher position of command, officers will have to give up that necessary MAJCOM or Air Staff experience that prepares them for the next command position. If an officer is doing well and goes to Senior Service School and then to a joint vice Headquarters

staff, how prepared is he or she to function as a Wing Commander with only joint experience and PME since being a Squadron Commander? Again, one runs into the problem of credibility in the job and the ability to function effectively as a commander. Secretary of the Army Marsh noted in his testimony to Congress that "...while joint duty is clearly a prerequisite for high level combat leaders, it is equally clear that it must not come at the expense of their operational expertise. That expertise is primarily derived from employing the forces of their own services." (30:--)

If officers take the opposite route and stay in joint duties, they begin to lose touch with the realities of how to plan for the effective use of the forces for which they are supposed to be the expert. As noted in GAO report #391067, one can stay in joint duty too long (emphasis added). If one does not renew the service operational perspective, one's value in the joint world could be limited.

The mix between operational perspective, operational capability, joint perspective, and joint capability is a fine line that requires a significant amount of foresight and planning. Establishing a set of rules with no exceptions can be a dangerous gamble on the capability of our military. There is no single answer to the question of experience needed to be successful in command. The

operational experience that each individual carries into a command position in any service is a carefully nurtured capability that ensures optimum use of the forces at one's command. If one cannot effectively employ the forces of one's current command, then no amount of joint experience will solve the problem. If we want to maintain an effective fighting force, we need to ensure that our commanders have the service experience necessary to win the battle at hand. The only way to accomplish this is with thoroughly proficient commanders who fully understand, without hesitation, the capabilities and responsibilities of their parent service forces.

The relationship between operational experience and joint capability is the key to the overall effective employment of U.S. military forces. However, losing sight of one without considering the other could have long term damaging effects on those forces capabilities. Legislating sweeping changes to the way we manage the training and grooming of our next commanders opens the door to unforeseen difficulties.

The ability of the services to employ "jointly" to counter any possible threat is the reason we exist. But, is this legislative change enhancing our capability, or decreasing our capability? The services have built a system of assignments and experience that prepares an officer to assume command and be successful at that

command. Joint experience is necessary, but, below the general/flag rank level, it can come at the expense of operational expertise using forces that a commander is supposed to employ. Operational expertise and knowledge is the cornerstone in building a successful leader and a military career, not just the knowledge of how to effectively integrate the force at the joint level.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act of 1986 has been touted as the most significant legislation affecting the Department of Defense in the last 30+ years. While military reform has been talked about and discussed for years, this act is the first significant change to the way the military operates since the National Security Act of 1947.

One of the most important aspects of the legislation is Title IV which governs management of joint officer requirements and resources. It has far reaching impacts that only time and experience can truly measure. Some portions of the legislation can be forecast with some measure of confidence based on current force structure, force posture, experience and history.

A significant impact will be the increase of the military services joint capability with the assignment of some of their best officers to joint billets. With the requirement for a joint tour before selection to general officer, the services will be forced to place the joint tour in the career pattern for each of its future leaders. The joint assignment and designation as a JSO will become necessary "ticket punching" stops to be successful in a military career.

In turn, this will cause an increase in the careerism

within the Air Force. While careerism is not something that can ever be completely stopped, it is difficult, if not impossible, to slow it down when the entire officer corps has a career path defined by legislation.

The next observable effect will be the increase in the promotion selection rate for the JSOs to general officer, and a corresponding drop in the selection rate for the non-JSOs. This will become an ingrained part of the officer promotion selection system and produce a non-competitive, non-JSO.

The effect on the "non-joint" officers will be undetermined until the system has been in effect for a period of time. However, our analysis indicates that we can expect the "non-joint" officers to react by leaving the service early, retiring early, or simply being less motivated on the job than they would have been with a possibility of future promotions.

These changes to the management of the officer corps have been legislated with the intent of improving our joint military capability, but, they carry a potential severe penalty for the entire corps and the military in general.

Our analysis indicates that the new legislation will enhance our joint capability, will cause an increase in careerism, will cause career plateauing of the non-JSO, will impact the promotion system, and will affect the combat capability of our future leaders.

#### RECOMMENDATION

Our recommendation is that the congressional architects of the Goldwater/Nichols DOD Reorganization Act of 1986 hold a conference with representatives of each of the armed services. The conference should be dedicated to framing legislation that accomplishes the aims of Congress in putting "joint service" in proper perspective, and also includes workable plans for implementation and integration of the program with necessary service goals of building future leaders.

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